

Original Paper

Developing Workers' Sports Engagement in Northern Vietnam's Industrial Zones

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Abstract

This article extensively analyzes workers' sports participation in Northern Vietnam's industrial zones, shedding light on the modern labor landscape. It underscores the importance of achieving work-life balance, where sports contribute to physical well-being, stress management, and positive workplace relationships. Additionally, the article addresses challenges like work-related stress, time management, and sports infrastructure investment. It emphasizes the roles of labor unions and businesses in promoting sports and employee well-being through facilities, events, and encouragement. This article initiates discussions on sports' significance in workers' lives, aiming to improve the work environment and overall quality of life.

Keywords

sports, workers, industrial zones, Northern Vietnam, labor unions, businesses

1. Introduction

The industrial zones in Northern Vietnam have undergone significant development in recent times, contributing substantially to the national economy. However, this progress often accompanies considerable work-related pressures that can profoundly impact the well-being of laborers. To strike a balance in their lives and enhance their overall health, sports activities have become an integral part of their daily routines. This article will primarily focus on assessing the state of sports engagement among laborers in Northern Vietnam's industrial zones, while also examining the roles of labor unions and businesses in promoting sports and fostering community health within the labor force (Note 1).

In addition to addressing the challenges faced by laborers when participating in sports activities, we will explore the manifold benefits derived from such engagements. Sports not only play a pivotal role in

maintaining physical fitness but also aid in stress management and the cultivation of positive coworker relationships.

Furthermore, we will delve into the crucial aspects of achieving a work-life balance for laborers, as the integration of work and personal life increasingly forms an integral part of their overall life vision.

Moreover, this article will delve into the pivotal roles that labor unions and businesses play in promoting sports activities and enhancing community health among the labor force. These organizations are instrumental in providing facilities, sports equipment, organizing sporting events, and encouraging active participation among laborers.

Ultimately, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to partake in sports activities can be the key to elevating the quality of life and job satisfaction for all. This article will explore various means and solutions to integrate sports activities seamlessly into the lives and work of laborers in Northern Vietnam's industrial zones (Note 2).

2. Research Methodology

The research methodology employed in this article involves conducting in-depth analysis to examine the sports landscape among laborers in Northern Vietnam's industrial zones. This study relies on a combination of statistical data, direct surveys, and the analysis of relevant documents. In order to gather detailed information, surveys were conducted with laborers in various industrial zones, assessing their frequency of sports participation, personal preferences, and the challenges they encounter during their involvement.

Additionally, this article utilizes statistical data to analyze the organizational framework of sports activities within governmental institutions and businesses operating in industrial zones. We selected a diverse sample, encompassing administrative agencies, domestic manufacturing enterprises, and foreign-invested companies.

The direct surveys and data collection from reliable sources have enhanced our understanding of the structure of sports activities, the frequency of sports event organization, and the level of interest exhibited by both laborers and organizations towards sports initiatives in the workplace.

In summary, the application of in-depth analytical research, in conjunction with statistical data and direct surveys, enables this article to comprehensively and intricately capture the sports landscape of laborers in Northern Vietnam's industrial zones. Furthermore, it provides valuable insights into the organizational framework of sports activities within this labor community.

3. Research Results and Discussion

3.1 The State of Workplace Sports in Northern Industrial Zones, Vietnam

Our investigation, which involved sending interview questionnaires to 270 businesses across 54 Northern industrial zones, has provided us with an overview of the state of sports in the workplace. The survey results are as follows:

The percentage of businesses that regularly organize sports training for their employees during or after working hours is exceptionally low, standing at a mere 4.07%. The vast majority of businesses (95.92%) do not regularly arrange sports training activities for their employees in the workplace.

Concerning sports competitions and tournaments, over half (52.59%) of the businesses do not organize such events within their organizations. 40.37% organize them only occasionally. The percentage of businesses that annually hold sports events for their employees is relatively low.

Among the businesses that do conduct annual sports events for their employees, the highest percentage belongs to foreign-invested enterprises (61.72%). This suggests that foreign-invested enterprises have displayed more interest in the role of sports activities in fostering connections among employees and enhancing the company's image from abroad within Vietnam. In contrast, the percentage of domestic manufacturing businesses that organize annual sports events for their employees is remarkably low, at only 14.06%.

From the employees' perspective, the percentage of workplaces where employees engage in sports training is 35.93%. Although this figure might appear modest, it indicates that a segment of employees has a demand for workplace sports training during suitable hours, promoting active relaxation, health improvement, and increased work efficiency.

3.2 The State of Workplace Sports Training Methods

We investigated the methods of sports training in the workplace within Northern Vietnam's industrial zones, and the research results are as follows:

Employees typically participate in workplace sports training in groups, with colleagues initiating training sessions (84.54%). The participation rate in sports club activities organized by workplace organizations, such as labor unions, youth unions, and social organizations, is relatively low, accounting for less than one-third (28.87%). This suggests that social organizations within businesses have not yet played a significant role in daily workplace sports training activities for employees.

3.3 The State of Annual Health Checkups for Workers

Only 32.22% of businesses conduct annual health checkups for their workers. The majority of businesses, over two-thirds, do not organize this activity. This indicates that many businesses in urban areas of Vietnam are currently not fully complying with the regulations concerning regular health checkups for employees as stipulated in Article 21 of the 2015 Occupational Safety and Health Law (Note 3).

3.4 Discussion

The research has uncovered several noteworthy findings regarding sports activities within the labor community in Northern Vietnam's industrial zones. I will now offer a comprehensive analysis of the advantages and challenges associated with the development of these sports activities.

**Advantages:*

Enhanced health: Sports activities have played a crucial role in improving the health and physical fitness of laborers. These benefits not only help them maintain better overall health but also provide a solid foundation for dealing with the demands of work and daily life.

Fostering relationships: Engagement in sports activities provides laborers with opportunities to forge close bonds and camaraderie with their colleagues. This fosters a sense of unity within the labor community and cultivates a friendly environment, thereby boosting their self-confidence.

Stress reduction: Sports activities serve as an effective means for laborers to alleviate stress and unwind after demanding work hours. This contributes to maintaining a positive outlook and preparedness for the challenges of the next workday.

**Challenges:*

Work pressure: Workers often contend with heavy workloads and extended working hours. Consequently, the organization of sports activities must be adaptable and flexible to accommodate their schedules and conditions.

Limited free time: The leisure time of laborers in industrial zones is frequently restricted, particularly for those who have family responsibilities and children to care for. Striking a balance between work, family, and sports can sometimes present a daunting challenge.

Facilities and equipment: In order to promote sports activities, industrial zones need to invest in sports facilities and equipment. This encompasses the construction of soccer fields, tennis courts, gymnasiums, and the provision of sports equipment. This financial commitment can pose challenges for many businesses and organizations.

3.5 The Role of Labor Unions and Businesses in Promoting Sports Activities for Workers

Labor unions and businesses play a significant role in promoting sports activities for workers. Here are some ways in which they can contribute:

Providing facilities and equipment: Labor unions and businesses can invest in sports facilities and equipment to create favorable conditions for workers to participate. This includes building sports fields, gymnasiums, and supplying quality sports equipment. (Note 5)

Organizing sports events: Hosting internal sports competitions and outdoor sports events can encourage workers to participate and compete in a healthy manner. These events create opportunities for individuals to showcase their athletic abilities and strengthen camaraderie within the company. (Note 5, Note 6)

Encouraging participation: Labor unions and businesses can motivate participation in sports activities by creating playgrounds and offering flexible schedules for workers. This helps promote a sporting spirit and overall well-being in daily work life. (Note 7, Note 8)

In summary, sports activities have played and continue to play a crucial role in the lives and development of workers in Northern Vietnam's industrial zones. Their advantages include improving health, building relationships, and reducing stress. However, challenges remain to be addressed. Labor unions and businesses have a vital role in promoting sports activities, and they should consider tackling these challenges to enhance the quality of life for workers. Sports activities not only help them stay healthy but also foster unity and job satisfaction.

Sports activities have been and continue to be a vital part of the lives and development of workers in Northern Vietnam's industrial zones. They help balance life by providing a contrast to work and

enhancing overall health. Internal and outdoor sports competitions not only provide a platform for workers but also foster a sense of unity in the workplace.

Furthermore, sports activities offer numerous personal benefits. Improvements in physical health enable workers to be more effective, reduce the risk of illnesses, and boost confidence. Sports also promote social relationships, make the work environment friendlier, and create a healthy community. (Note 6)

However, there are still challenges in promoting sports activities. Some individuals may lack the time or motivation to participate and require support and encouragement from labor unions and businesses. Issues related to sports infrastructure and sponsorship can also affect the ability to organize sports events (Note 6).

Therefore, labor unions and businesses should continue to invest in and promote sports activities for workers. This may include improving sports infrastructure, providing incentives through sports programs, and ensuring that workers have the time and conditions to participate. Sports activities not only help them stay healthy but also contribute to a positive working environment and enhance their quality of life.

4. Conclusion

Sports activities have played and continue to play a crucial role in the lives and development of workers in Northern Vietnam's industrial zones. They help workers strike a balance between their personal and professional lives, improve their health, and foster a friendly and cohesive atmosphere within the labor community. When labor unions and businesses support and promote sports activities, they contribute to cultivating a healthy environment and enhancing the overall quality of life for workers.

By ensuring that workers have opportunities to participate in sports activities and maintain their well-being, we can forge a robust and productive future for Northern Vietnam's industrial zones. It is imperative to emphasize the organization of regular sports events, provision of sports facilities and equipment, and encouragement of worker participation. These measures will assist them in enhancing their health, reducing stress, and nurturing positive professional relationships.

In summary, sports activities yield not only personal benefits but also contribute significantly to the advancement of the labor community and industrial zones. It is crucial to acknowledge the importance of promoting sports activities and to actively develop them to establish a healthy environment and elevate the quality of life for workers.

References (Notes)

Note 1. The Central Party Committee's Resolution No. 08-NQ/TW dated December 1, 2011, on "Enhancing the Party's Leadership for the Strong Development of Physical Education and Sports by 2020."

Note 2. The Prime Minister's Decision No. 2198/QĐ-TTĐ dated December 3, 2020, regarding the "Approval of the Strategy for the Development of Sports and Physical Education in Vietnam until 2030."

Note 3. Occupational Safety and Health Law, No: 84/2015/QĐ13, enacted in 2015.

Note 4. Hoang Cong Dan and colleagues (2017), “Theory and Methods of Mass Physical Training and Sports,” Sports Publishing House, Hanoi.

Note 5. <https://amp.laodong.vn/lao-dong-cuoi-tuan/tao-san-choi-the-thao-cho-cong-nhan-lao-dong-1192128.lido>

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